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## Fwd: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation

1 message

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Nils Ericson** <[nericson@m2structural.com](mailto:nericson@m2structural.com)>

Date: Mon, Oct 22, 2018 at 4:35 PM

Subject: RE: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation

To: Kat Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>

Cc: Dan Maas <[dmaas@ai3online.com](mailto:dmaas@ai3online.com)>, Chris Carfora <[cCarfora@ai3online.com](mailto:cCarfora@ai3online.com)>

Kat,

The purpose of our initial site visit was stated in our letter: render an opinion as to the need for temporary shoring of the existing building columns due to the discovery of an underslab void in close proximity to the existing column foundations. We recommended the installation of temporary shoring of the existing columns while the void is fully investigated and repaired. In our letter, we also concurred with the recommendation in Piedmont's Field Report that additional investigation be performed to identify the cause and full extents of the underslab void. We received and reviewed a temporary column shoring submittal from the contractor on August 28, 2018 but have not been notified of its' installation nor have we visited the since our initial visit on July 18, 2018. We were unaware of any new activity at the site related to the underslab void until Dan forwarded me your email this afternoon. At no time did we render an opinion as to the stability of the sinkhole; we would always defer a soil stability evaluation to a geotechnical professional.

Thank you,

**Nils V. Ericson III, PE**

Principal

**m2 Structural, LLC**

direct: 678-666-5714

office: 404-829-2612

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**1071 Piedmont Road - Suite A**

1 message

**Nils Ericson** <nericson@m2structural.com>

Mon, Nov 5, 2018 at 4:20 PM

To: Dan Maas &lt;dmaas@ai3online.com&gt;, Chris Carfora &lt;cCarfora@ai3online.com&gt;, drolettlaw@gmail.com

Kat/Dan/Chris,

As a follow up to our conference call, we offer the following regarding the underslab void discovered in Suite A at 1071 Piedmont Road. Please let me know if you have questions.

- During slab on grade removal in Suite A, an underslab void was discovered by JM Williams, the general contractor for the proposed renovations. At the request of ai3 and JM Williams, m2 visited the site on July 18, 2018. As noted in our report dated July 25, 2018, the purpose of the visit was to review the location of the underslab void with respect to the existing building superstructure in Suite A to determine if temporary shoring of the existing superstructure was required while the cause and extents of the void were further investigated and repairs to the sewer or improvements to the underslab subgrade were designed and employed. As noted in the report, m2 visually observed the location and depth of the void and reviewed the original existing construction documents for Suite A. In the report, m2 recommended temporarily shoring two existing steel columns in Suite A until the void was fully investigated and repaired. As noted in the report, the review was limited to structural elements within Suite A. Observation of structural elements in other areas of the building was not requested, not performed and was expressly excluded from the report. M2 contracted directly with JM Williams for consulting related to the discovery of the underslab void as it was an unforeseen existing site condition unrelated to construction administration services associated with the proposed renovations.
- Per the recommendations of our report, JM Williams submitted shop drawings for the temporary column shoring. This submittal was reviewed and approved, with comments, by m2 on August 28, 2018.
- On October 22, 2018, we were forwarded a memo prepared by the City of Atlanta. The memo describes the investigation of the sewer at [1071 Piedmont Road](#) performed by the Department of Watershed Management on October 10, 2018. The memo indicates that, after the inspection, the existing sinkhole was excavated to the top of sewer and backfilled with cellular grout.

The DWM memo does not indicate if the temporary shoring recommended in the report prepared by m2 was installed.

The DWM memo concludes that the sewer did not cause the sinkhole.

The DWM memo does not include material or placement specifications for the cellular grout. Further, the memo does not include any grout placement observations or inspections.

- On October 23, 2018, we were notified that JM Williams was no longer the general contractor for this project. It was not noted when they terminated services.

Our report recommended the installation of temporary column shoring in Suite A while the cause and extents of the void were further investigated and repairs to the sewer or improvements to the underslab subgrade were designed and employed. It is not clear if this temporary shoring was installed, but it is clear that the investigation and repairs are still ongoing. Please confirm if the shoring shown on the approved submittal was installed and is still in place.

Questions were raised on our conference call about the adequacy of the sewer inspection performed. Sewer pipe inspections are outside of our area of expertise; we defer to a professional with experience with evaluations of sewers of this vintage as to the adequacy of the inspection methods, observations and conclusions contained in the memo.

Questions were raised on our conference call about documentation of the cellular grout placement in the excavation in Suite A. Typically, a geotechnical professional provides slab subgrade material and placement specifications and site inspections for conformance with those specifications. If these specifications and inspections were not documented, it is recommended that a geotechnical professional be engaged to perform an investigation of the undocumented subgrades and provide recommendations (if necessary) for subgrade improvements.

Finally, as noted above, our contract for consulting services associated with the unforeseen underslab void at Suite A was executed by JM Williams, who is no longer involved with this project. We've completed the full extent of our scope of services in that contract pertaining to the underslab void. If there are specific questions regarding the recommendations in our report or in the summary above, I am available to answer them, but as noted above, resolution of this issue requires the engagement of other design professionals. We still have a contract to perform C/A services for the renovations and as long as satisfactory documentation is provided by a geotechnical professional regarding the stability of the building's underslab soils, we will perform those services at the appropriate time.

Thank you,

Nils V. Ericson III, PE

Principal

m2 Structural, LLC

887 west marietta st. nw

suite T-103

atlanta, ga 30318

direct: 678-666-5714

office: 404-829-2612

m2structural.com



Katherine Drolett <drolettlaw@gmail.com>

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**RE: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation**

1 message

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**John Norton** <johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com>  
To: Katherine Drolett <drolettlaw@gmail.com>

Thu, Oct 11, 2018 at 4:31 PM

Katherine,

The city is basically saying that they did not cause the sinkhole due to one of their sewers. So if they didn't cause it, what did? Not sure what else to say.

Sincerely,

**John M. Norton | MBA**

Operations Manager



mobile | 770-776-7480

office | 678-242-3015

email | [johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com](mailto:johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com)

JMWilliamsContractors.com

ATLANTA • AUBURN • TAMPA

Home Office:

[400 Franklin Gateway](#)

[Suite 200](#)

[Marietta, GA 30067](#)



**From:** Katherine Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 11, 2018 1:43 PM  
**To:** John Norton <[johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com](mailto:johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: [1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation](#)

John,

Can you give me your thoughts on these reports please?

Thank you,

Katherine

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Mark Banta** <[mbanta@piedmontpark.org](mailto:mbanta@piedmontpark.org)>  
**Date:** Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 9:14 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: [1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation](#)  
**To:** Katherine Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>, Katherine D <[gmacquisitions@gmail.com](mailto:gmacquisitions@gmail.com)>, Walker's Construction ([Walkers1834@gmail.com](mailto:Walkers1834@gmail.com)) <[Walkers1834@gmail.com](mailto:Walkers1834@gmail.com)>

Please see attached.

Mark Banta  
President & CEO  
Piedmont Park Conservancy

**W:** 404-875-7275, ext. 226

**C:** 770-402-8814

**E:** [mbanta@piedmontpark.org](mailto:mbanta@piedmontpark.org)



----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lewis, Christopher** <CHLewis@atlantaga.gov>

Date: Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 5:01 PM

Subject: [1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation](#)

To: Mark Banta <mbanta@piedmontpark.org>

Cc: "Powell, Kishia" <kpowell@atlantaga.gov>, "Browning, Mikita" <mbrowning@atlantaga.gov>, "McShane, M. Patrick" <mpmcshane@atlantaga.gov>, "Lewis, Christopher" <CHLewis@atlantaga.gov>

Good afternoon Mark,

Attached are the following documents related to the matters at the aforementioned subject address:

1. Memorandum summarizing activities by Department of Watershed management
2. Exhibits to support attached Memorandum

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Thank you,

Chris Lewis  
Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Watershed Management  
770-560-5225



Katherine Drolett <drolettlaw@gmail.com>

**RE: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation**

1 message

**John Norton** <johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com>  
To: Katherine Drolett <drolettlaw@gmail.com>

Fri, Oct 12, 2018 at 8:26 AM

We would never fill it without an engineer telling us to do so.

Sincerely,

**John M. Norton | MBA**

Operations Manager



mobile | 770-776-7480

office | 678-242-3015

email | [johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com](mailto:johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com)

JMWilliamsContractors.com

ATLANTA • AUBURN • TAMPA

Home Office:

[400 Franklin Gateway](#)

[Suite 200](#)

[Marietta, GA 30067](#)



**From:** Katherine Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 11, 2018 5:16 PM  
**To:** John Norton <[johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com](mailto:johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation

Is filling the sinkhole something you would recommend, not knowing what caused the sinkhole?

On Thu, Oct 11, 2018 at 4:31 PM John Norton <[johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com](mailto:johnn@jmwilliamscontractors.com)> wrote:

Katherine,

The city is basically saying that they did not cause the sinkhole due to one of their sewers. So if they didn't cause it, what did? Not sure what else to say.

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**John M. Norton | MBA**

Operations Manager

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mobile | 770-776-7480

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Suite 200

Marietta, GA 30067



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**To:** Katherine Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>, Katherine D <[gmacquisitions@gmail.com](mailto:gmacquisitions@gmail.com)>, Walker's Construction ([Walkers1834@gmail.com](mailto:Walkers1834@gmail.com)) <[Walkers1834@gmail.com](mailto:Walkers1834@gmail.com)>

Please see attached.

Mark Banta  
President & CEO  
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**E:** [mbanta@piedmontpark.org](mailto:mbanta@piedmontpark.org)

<https://www.piedmontpark.org/>

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From: **Lewis, Christopher** <[CHLewis@atlantaga.gov](mailto:CHLewis@atlantaga.gov)>

Date: Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 5:01 PM

Subject: [1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation](#)

To: Mark Banta <[mbanta@piedmontpark.org](mailto:mbanta@piedmontpark.org)>

Cc: "Powell, Kishia" <[kpowell@atlantaga.gov](mailto:kpowell@atlantaga.gov)>, "Browning, Mikita" <[mbrowning@atlantaga.gov](mailto:mbrowning@atlantaga.gov)>, "McShane, M. Patrick" <[mprmcshane@atlantaga.gov](mailto:mprmcshane@atlantaga.gov)>, "Lewis, Christopher" <[CHLewis@atlantaga.gov](mailto:CHLewis@atlantaga.gov)>

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Thank you,

Chris Lewis  
Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Watershed Management  
770-560-5225



Katherine Drolett &lt;drolettlaw@gmail.com&gt;

---

**RE: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation**

1 message

**Nils Ericson** <nericson@m2structural.com>

Mon, Oct 22, 2018 at 3:33 PM

To: Dan Maas &lt;dmaas@ai3online.com&gt;

Cc: Katherine Drolett &lt;drolettlaw@gmail.com&gt;, Chris Carfora &lt;cCarfora@ai3online.com&gt;

Dan/Kat,

My thoughts are as follows:

- As structural consultants, we don't design/specify/inspect sewer pipes. So, the photos and testing in the referenced Exhibits don't mean a whole lot to me. I defer judgment on the condition and expected lifespan of the sewer pipes to a design professional that has experience with evaluations of sewers of this vintage and construction;
- Likewise, Piedmont has been engaged as the subsurface professional for this project. I tend to concur with their opinion about the undocumented work that was performed but ultimately will defer to their professional evaluation of the stability of the subgrade that supports the building;

Thank you,

**Nils V. Ericson III, PE**

Principal

**m2 Structural, LLC**

direct: 678-666-5714

office: 404-829-2612

---

**From:** Dan Maas [mailto:[dmaas@ai3online.com](mailto:dmaas@ai3online.com)]**Sent:** Monday, October 22, 2018 2:05 PM**To:** Nils Ericson <[nericson@m2structural.com](mailto:nericson@m2structural.com)>**Cc:** Katherine Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>; Chris Carfora <[cCarfora@ai3online.com](mailto:cCarfora@ai3online.com)>**Subject:** FW: 1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation

Hi Nils.

Can you please take a look at Kat's email below that summarizes the status of the sinkhole at Walkers?

Also, if you have any comments on the attached letter, please forward to me and Kat (copied here).

Thanks,

Dan

**Daniel Maas, AIA**

*Partner*

[dmaas@ai3online.com](mailto:dmaas@ai3online.com)

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916 Joseph E. Lowery Blvd.

Suite 1

Atlanta, Georgia 30318

404.583.9557

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---

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**Date:** Monday, October 22, 2018 at 1:37 PM  
**To:** Daniel Maas <[dmaas@ai3online.com](mailto:dmaas@ai3online.com)>, Chris Carfora <[cCarfora@ai3online.com](mailto:cCarfora@ai3online.com)>  
**Cc:** David Duley <[dave@icanfixamerica.com](mailto:dave@icanfixamerica.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: [1071 Piedmont Ave NE Documentation](#)

Dan,

To catch you up on things, this is the letter we received from the Conservancy. Can you forward to Nils? I left him a voicemail, but do not have his email.

We have asked both the City and Mark Banta for anything else they have. In the reports below, you will notice the City was unable to camera the sewer line due to debris. They did another smoke test, and a dye test that were inconclusive. The City says that the sinkhole is not caused by their sewer line, and they are not responsible. They, however, go on to further say that they filled the sink hole with grout.

I've asked for any information regarding how they filled it, why they filled it, if they had an engineer report supporting that action, who directed them to fill it, and the cause of the sink hole. They have provided nothing.

I think that the City told the Conservancy they were doing nothing about the hole, just like they had told them back in July, and that the Conservancy directed the City to simply fill the hole.

Piedmont Geotechnical has been on site. They were "shocked" that the hole was filled with grout, without any engineering reports or anything to support that action. Piedmont Geo says that the hole, being filled, while it may temporarily stabilize the immediate area, it may cause the erosion to shift to another area under the building. They also said, without a proper inspection, everyone is uncertain regarding the condition of the sewer line(s) under the building. Because of the above, they cannot deem the building to be safe.

It's a mess. The Conservancy really screwed it up this time. Please let me know your thoughts.

Thanks guys,

Katherine

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Date: Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 9:14 PM

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To: Katherine Drolett <[drolettlaw@gmail.com](mailto:drolettlaw@gmail.com)>, Katherine D <[gmacquisitions@gmail.com](mailto:gmacquisitions@gmail.com)>, Walker's Construction ([Walkers1834@gmail.com](mailto:Walkers1834@gmail.com)) <[Walkers1834@gmail.com](mailto:Walkers1834@gmail.com)>

Please see attached.

Mark Banta

President & CEO  
Piedmont Park Conservancy

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To: Mark Banta <[mbanta@piedmontpark.org](mailto:mbanta@piedmontpark.org)>

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Chris Lewis  
Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Watershed Management  
770-560-5225

# PIEDMONT

GEOTECHNICAL CONSULTANTS, LLC

— AN ATLAS COMPANY —

3000 Northfield Place, Suite 1100  
Roswell, Georgia 30076

November 7, 2018

Be Our Guest  
1144 Piedmont Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Attention: Ms. Katherine Drolett

**Subject: Comments Concerning Void**  
Soulshine Renovation  
1071 Piedmont Road, Suite A  
Atlanta, Georgia  
PGC Project No. 117502

Dear Ms. Drolett:

Engineers and technicians at Piedmont Geotechnical Consultants, LLC, working under the direction of the undersigned, have performed a variety of inspection and testing services during initial stages of the renovation of the above referenced project. The following summarizes our observations and opinion regarding a void which was discovered under a portion of the renovation.

In early July 2018, the general contractor saw-cut a portion of the slab within the existing building. That portion of the slab fell into a void that was unknown until that time. No direct measurement was made, but the void visually appeared to be about 6 feet long by 10 feet wide. On July 13, 2018 an engineer from our firm visited the subject site and observed the condition that was exposed. At that time he issued a field report in which he recommended the condition of an old rock sewer which existed below the slab be investigated as the "loss of ground" may have been caused by damage to the sewer line and that the flows through the sewer could be eroding the soils above the pipe. He further recommended that the structural engineer be notified in the event that additional/temporary foundation support is needed.

The undersigned has personally visited the site on several subsequent dates and has been provided reports by Palmer Engineering Company (September 18, 2018) and the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management. None of these reports have identified the cause of the void or addressed the potential impact of that unknown cause on the future performance or safety of the building.

During a site meeting in October 2018, I observed that the hole had been filled with grout placed by one of the crews from the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management, apparently to stabilize the void. While the hole has been filled, the condition that caused the void to form in the first place is still unknown.

In this geology a subsurface void is not a naturally occurring feature and has been created by some manmade source. Without knowing the source (cause) of the void, we cannot predict whether future loss of ground will occur and, if so, whether such loss of ground could impact future performance of the building or its safety.

Sincerely,  
**Piedmont Geotechnical Consultants, LLC**

*W Michael Ballard*

W. Michael Ballard, P.E.  
Senior Registered Engineer

WMB/ew

